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Viewing cable 09BEIJING2404, AFGHANISTAN - MANAGING THE NEIGHBORS: CHINA

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09BEIJING2404**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09BEIJING2404	2009-08-20 09:12	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Beijing

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.aftenposten.no/spesial/wikileaksdokumenter/article3992355.ece>

VZCZCXRO6900
OO RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHSL RUEHVC
DE RUEHBJ #2404/01 2320912
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 200912Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5722
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE 0266
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE 0470
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT IMMEDIATE 0755
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE 0369
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 9759
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE IMMEDIATE
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 9389
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 4930
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH IMMEDIATE 0678
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 1341
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT IMMEDIATE 0078
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0024
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE 0009
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 0116

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 002404

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/20/2029

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN - MANAGING THE NEIGHBORS: CHINA

REF: A. STATE 085136

[1](#)B. BEIJING 998

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson. Reasons 1.
4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: China's interests in promoting stability along its borders, combating unrest in its western Xinjiang province, and exploiting natural resources in Afghanistan to fuel its domestic economic growth would be advanced by a successful election in Afghanistan, according to PRC scholars and diplomats. MFA officials stress that the United States and China share "common interests" in Afghan elections conducted "smoothly and securely" and affirm that China would respect the choice of the Afghan people. We assess that China will seek to play a positive public role in post-election Afghanistan, though its actions and statements will continue to avoid direct, high-profile association with U.S. military activities and diplomatic efforts. End Summary. MFA: U.S. and PRC Views on Election "Exactly the Same"

[1](#)2. (C) China shares a common interest with the United States in ensuring that the August 20 Afghan elections proceed "smoothly and securely," MFA Asian Affairs Department Pakistan and Afghanistan Division Acting Director Hou Yanqi told PolOff on August 19 in response to ref A points urging PRC cooperation in ensuring Afghan elections are credible, secure and inclusive. Noting the Secretary's August 17 statement describing U.S. support and expectations for the Afghan elections, Director Hou said China's views "are exactly the same." Hou reiterated the PRC position on the Afghan election offered by Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zhengyue in his April 15 presentation to SRAP Holbrooke in Beijing, namely that China hoped the elections would be fair and just and that the new government would be broad-based, represent all of Afghanistan's ethnic groups and be dedicated to peace and harmony with its neighbors and the international community. China had no preference for candidates and would respect the choice of the Afghan people.
China's Strategic Interests in Afghan Election

[1](#)3. (C) Given its shared border with Afghanistan, its acute sensitivity to the potential spread of unrest from Afghanistan into western China and its significant investments in Afghanistan's natural resources, China has a strong interest in post-election stability in Afghanistan. MFA's Hou stressed that China was "highly concerned" about the security situation in Afghanistan, citing an August 15 car-bomb attack outside of NATO headquarters and separate rocket attacks August 18 near the Chinese Embassy in Kabul. China shared U.S. concern about the potential for post-election violence, particularly if a second round of voting were required. China had an immediate interest in the safety of its embassy staff and the more than 120 Chinese workers at the Aynak copper mine, as well as a broader interest in Afghanistan's security and development, according to Hou. More broadly, PRC officials regularly express concern about the East Turkestan Islamic Movement's potential use of Afghanistan as a staging base for launching attacks on Chinese interests both within the region and in China, and emphasize China's "major interest" in the fight against East Turkestan separatists.

[1](#)4. (C) China is also focused on protecting its natural resource investments in Afghanistan, in particular, the 3-billion-USD investment of state-owned China Metallurgical Group Corporation (MCC) in the Aynak copper mine, the largest foreign investment project in Afghanistan. Chinese state-owned companies are vying for large contracts to develop the Hajigak iron deposit in central Afghanistan and oil and gas fields in northern Afghanistan. Afghan EmbOff [TEXT REMOVED BY AFTENPOSTEN] noted to EmbOffs August 17 that if Chinese companies were successful in winning these bids, total

Chinese investment in Afghanistan could surpass USD 20 billion by 2014, making China the largest foreign investor in Afghanistan. Security concerns, however, dictate the pace of Chinese investment in Afghanistan. Although China welcomed Afghanistan's deployment of 1500 national police guards to help secure the area surrounding the Aynak copper mine, ongoing MCC concerns about security had slowed progress on the project. According to Afghan diplomat [TEXT REMOVED BY AFTENPOSTEN], MCC was cautiously waiting to assess the post-election security environment before it increased the number of Chinese workers at the copper mine project.

China Invested in a Safe and Credible Election

¶5. (C) Chinese officials and scholars have emphasized repeatedly the common U.S. and Chinese interest in a safe and credible election. According to Afghan diplomat [TEXT REMOVED BY AFTENPOSTEN], China was invested in the election, having contributed USD 500,000 to Afghan authorities to support implementation.
Engaging China on the Election

¶6. (C) Given China's strategic interests in Afghanistan, we believe the PRC will on its own initiative use its contacts in Afghanistan to urge restraint among vying parties and factions in the event of post-election unrest. However, China will strive to avoid high-profile identification with U.S. initiatives or interests in the region. As China Daily, the Chinese Communist Party's flagship English-language mouthpiece, stated in its June 19 editorial: "(Afghan) election day is a test for U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan." We could best ensure a helpful public Chinese role by encouraging China to issue constructive post-election statements and to support such statements from the United Nations and other members of the international community.
GOLDBERG